



Changing Careers

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In the last 20 years, job insecurity and job jumping have become the norm. What's more, research shows that people who stay with an employer year after year get smaller pay increases over time than people who change jobs strategically.

Here's how to make the strategy work for you :

1 Forget about playing it safe, and get comfortable with change and risk. Consider changing jobs—or even careers—every so often to be part of your overall career strategy.

2 Always be on the lookout for your next job. Keep your eyes and ears open, and do your research on wages, growth occupations and industries, and economic trends. A good place to begin that research is on the DWS Economic Information Web site: <http://jobs.utah.gov/wi/> .

3 Create your own plan. Clearly define your objective. Keep a running list of projects you've worked on and find the common threads running through the list. This will help you identify the skills and knowledge you can offer a new employer. If you're serious, be willing to relocate.

4 Keep your skills and training up-to-date, especially in technology. Take classes, volunteer, or work part-time where you can learn new software or skills to stay current.

5 Network like crazy. This is still the best way to learn about new opportunities.

6 Leave your current job when things are good. Otherwise, you'll be sabotaging yourself. Be a model employee up to the minute you leave your job, and stay until you're hired for the new one.

7 Think of yourself as a product, and market yourself. Put yourself in the employer's shoes and tailor your efforts to that perspective. Go out and sell yourself—don't wait for the opportunities to come to you.

You can use the instability of the job market to your advantage and better yourself with each strategic job move.

On The Web

<http://www.careerknowhow.com/guidance/career-change.htm>

<http://www.massbg.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=123>